
American Girl
March/April 2005
$3.95
Fighting with Friends? Take Our Quiz!
Spring Break Fun at Home
Horse Stuff You'll Love
Score! A Soccer Story
Plus Make pretty Easter eggs!

American Girl™

Volume 13, Number 2

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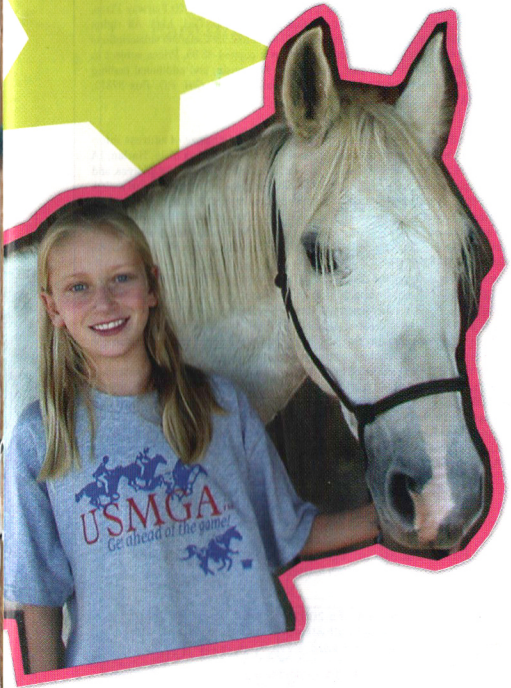
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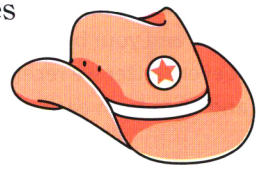


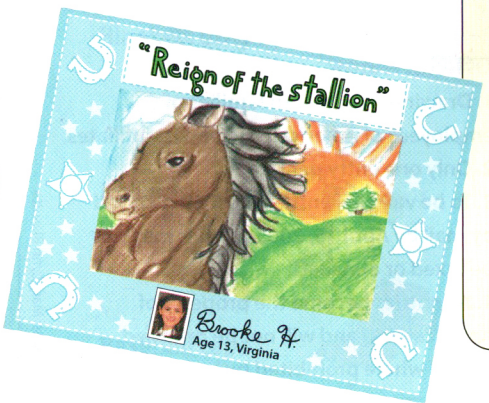
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About the Cover

Meet Kelsey G., age 9. We asked her what she likes best about spring:

Baby bunnies or baby chicks?

Baby chicks

Hunting for eggs or dyeing eggs?

Hunting for eggs. Last year my birthday was on Easter, so we hunted for eggs at my birthday party!

Jumping rope or playing hopscotch?

Jumping rope

St. Patrick's Day or April Fools' Day?

April Fools' Day. I like to pull pranks.

Kelsey G.

To see more pictures from our photo shoot, go to "Behind the Scenes" on page 49.

Cover photo: John McArthur

Letters from You



Helping Hand

I liked your article "The Art of Giving" in the November/December 2004 issue. My sister has cerebral palsy, and it made us happy to know that Hanna uses the money she makes to help kids with disabilities.

Emily H.
Age 11, California



Cute Crafts

I liked the "Wrap & Roll" craft in November/December—it was definitely the cutest craft of the year! I made one as soon as I got the magazine, and I'll be making them all holiday season for my friends and family.

Maria H. :-)
Age 11, North Carolina



Classy Ideas

Every holiday, we have a class party at my school. My mom brings the snacks, games, and activities. She's been using the "Creative Corner" from your magazine. Thanks for such great ideas!

Katie M.
Age 10, New Jersey



Write to Us!

Want to drop us a line? Write us at:

American Girl magazine
8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562

You can also send letters via e-mail to im_agmag_editor@americangirl.com. Either way, be sure to include your first and last name and your birth date. We can't print every letter we receive, but we read and learn from each one.

Win It!

On page 23, you'll read about our latest Win It! contest. Enter by sending your first and last name and your address by April 15 to:

Win It!—M/A 05
American Girl magazine
8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562



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1. Drawing not open to families of employees of American Girl and its affiliates.
2. Only one entry per family.
3. To be valid, all entries must be received by mail by April 15, 2005. Entries may not be faxed or e-mailed.
4. All entries become the property of American Girl and will not be returned.
5. Void where prohibited by law.

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The National Magazine Awards Finalist

AmericanGirl

Girls EXPRESS

Spring for Spring!

Just look around—you can see whether spring has sprung.

Still winter	It's spring!
Snowboards 	Skateboards 
Hot chocolate 	Chocolate bunnies 
Bare branches 	Budding branches 
Furry boots 	Funky sandals 
Blankets on beds 	Blankets on grass 
Ice-skating 	Roller-skating 
Stocking caps 	Baseball caps 



Did You Know?

You'll flip for these fun facts!

Lucky Charm



March 17 is St. Patrick's Day. In Ireland and around the world, the rare four-leaf clover is a sign of good luck. Only about one in 10,000 clovers has four leaves. See if you can find one!

Buzzword

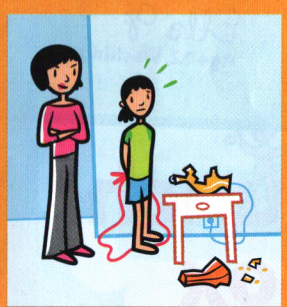


tomfoolery

How to say it: tom-FOOL-ree

What it means: Foolish or senseless behavior

One way to use it: Crash! Emma's tomfoolery would leave her grounded again.



The buzzword is tucked into this issue of *American Girl*. Can you find it? The answer is on page 44.

Find It!



Look for fun facts sprinkled throughout the magazine!

Illustrations: Tracey Wood

True Story

Ella G. set out to change the clothes she saw in stores.

Dear American Girl,

I was on a shopping trip at Nordstrom with my mom, my sister, and some friends. My sister tried on a pair of jeans that fit well. But the sales clerk said, "Oh, no, you want a size smaller so you can have 'The Look.'" I thought, "That's not right," and I decided to do something about it.

So I wrote a letter to Nordstrom asking them to make their clothing styles more modest. And I got two letters back! The Nordstrom people said that they would try to change their styles and educate their staff.

When the newspaper here heard about the Nordstrom letters, it ran the story on the front page. Since then, the news has gone all over the country! And now the Nordstrom Web site sells clothes called "Modern and Modest."

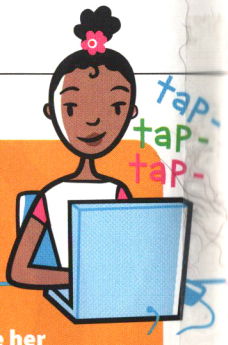
I learned that if you speak up for what is right, people just might listen.

Sincerely,
Ella G.
Age 12, Washington



Photo: Diane Ahern

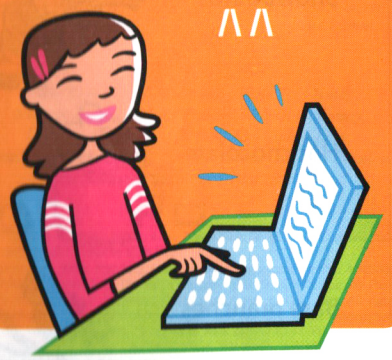
Ella and her youth group modeled modest gear.



Kindness Keys

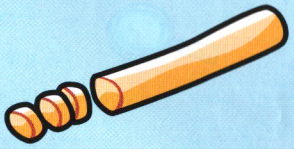
Have a friend who's down in the dumps? E-mail or text message her one of these pick-me-ups. She's sure to say THX!

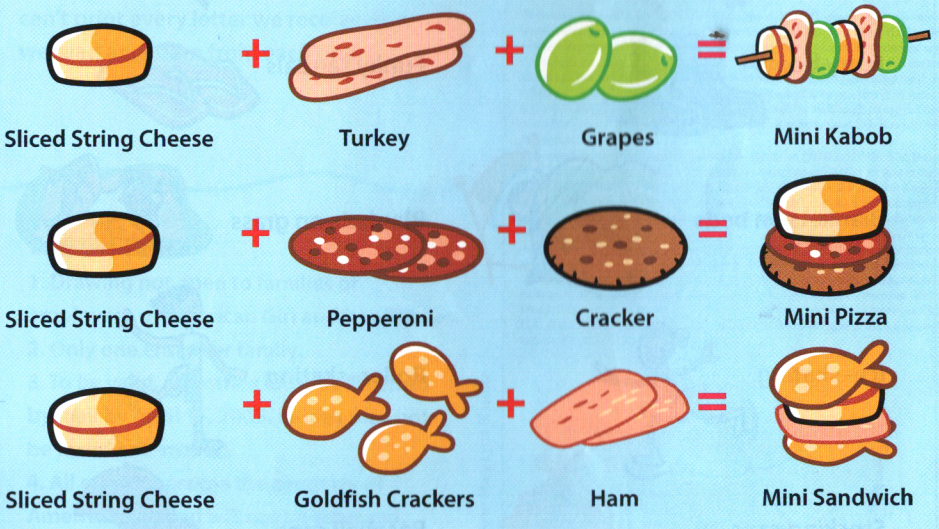
Rose	@>--->----
Hug	((((you))))
High five	^5
Bandage	(: :( ): :)
Cookies	@@@
Clown	*<):o)
Horse	<_~ /\ /\



Lunch Box

Do a new thing with string cheese—slice it instead of peeling it!





Just Foolin'

Outfox your friends and family on April Fools' Day with these nifty tricks and pranks.

Ice Cubed

The night before April 1, freeze the brushy parts of all your family members' toothbrushes into individual ice cubes. Fill plastic cups with water. Add brushes, and freeze overnight. Then get up early and return all the frozen brushes to their proper places. Cool trick!





Diamond Pin

Place a dime and a safety pin in a small box. Wrap the box nicely. Tell a friend she's such a good pal that you want to give her a "diamond pin" as a gift. When she opens the box, she'll find a "dime and pin." April Fool!

Elbow Room

Play this prank on a friend who thinks she's strong. Tell her you can put something in her right hand that she can't hold in her left hand. Then take her left elbow and put it in her right hand. She can't hold her left elbow in her left hand, can she? Gotcha!



Creative Corner

Fuzzy Flower



Cut out card. Flip over for directions.

Cut out your answer and mail it to us with your first and last name, address, and birth date.

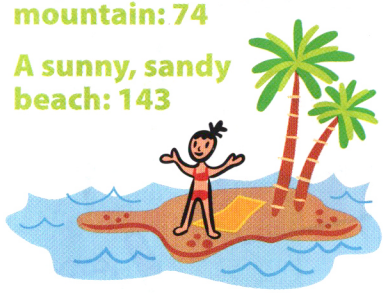
AG Poll

In our November/December issue, we asked about your dream vacation destination. Here's what readers said:

A spirited, shiny city: 71

A sparkly, snowy mountain: 74

A sunny, sandy beach: 143



Next question:

The water in most swimming pools looks cool blue. But what would be your fantasy water color? Circle your choice:

- Pink
- Orange
- Silver
- Purple



You will need:

- 2 pieces of 3-foot-long yarn
- Pipe cleaner
- Pom-pom
- Glue



1 Wrap the yarn around your fingers to create a loop as shown above.



2 Pinch the yarn loop together and twist pipe cleaner tightly around center.

3 Pull yarn around to look like a flower. Glue pom-pom in the center of the flower and let dry. Display in a vase.

Photos: Jamie Young

Help Wanted!

We need you for Girls Express! Send your contributions to the address on page 2. Sorry, but submissions can't be returned. Here are some of the places your stories, art, or ideas could appear:

True Story





Lunch Box

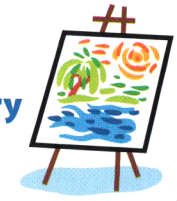
Poetry





Letter Art

AG Art Gallery



Twisty Business

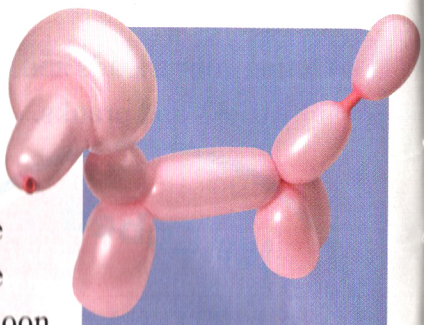
Hannah B. loves animals—balloon animals, that is.

Hannah's friend had gotten a job as a balloon artist at a local restaurant, and Hannah thought she could do it, too. So she bought some supplies, taught herself to make balloon animals, and started a business called Terrific Twists. She advertised her new venture through a local party store.

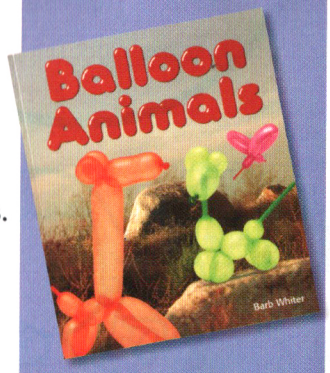
"I got calls from people who were willing to pay me as much as $25 to $30 an hour!" says Hannah, age 13.

People hire Hannah to make balloon animals at festivals and children's parties. She also watches the newspaper for family-oriented events that might have a place for a balloon artist. Hannah's mom drops her off at jobs and makes sure the events are safe for Hannah. Her job is really fun, and the only bad thing about it is that Hannah's fingers get sore after tying so many balloons.

"It's a great job because I make a lot of money, but it's also something I enjoy doing," she says.



What is Hannah's favorite balloon animal to make? A poodle!



Hannah recommends buying a book that has step-by-step instructions. That way, you can take it with you on jobs in case you forget the steps!



Hannah wears a colorful apron to help her stay organized while she works. She makes balloon hats as well as animals!

Photos: Jamie Young

AG Art Gallery

You sent us so much artwork that we've expanded the size of our gallery in this issue!





Katie S.
Age 13, Pennsylvania

Emily B.
Age 13, New Jersey





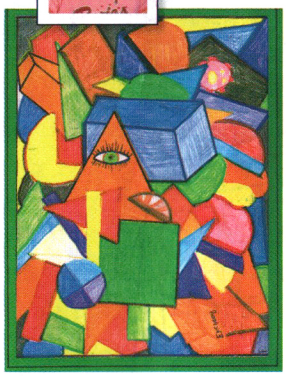




Elizabeth G.
Age 8, New Jersey

Erin M.
Age 9, California





Shining Star



Annabelle L. was worried about her school crossing guard. Her Virginia school faced a busy highway. Traffic whizzed past, making it dangerous for the guard to stop the cars so that kids could cross. For more than 25 years, people had tried unsuccessfully to have a traffic light installed nearby.

Annabelle, age 8 at the time, heard about the problem, and she decided to help. With her parents' permission, she went to a government meeting to talk about it.

"I was a little bit nervous, and I had to stand on a chair to be seen," she says. She told the officials that she wanted the crossing guard to be safe at his job. And it worked! The traffic signal was installed, and Annabelle got to cut the ribbon at the new light.

"It was exciting," says Annabelle, now 10. "The county administrator said when I finish college, to let him know and they may have a job for me at the administration building." ★

You can shine, too. If you see a dangerous situation that needs fixing, don't be afraid to speak up. Your efforts might save a life!

Planet Protectors

To celebrate Earth Day, we asked you to invent something to protect the planet. Here are some of our favorite ideas.





Edible Dishware

You may think you're done eating, but you're not! Go ahead, take a bite of your dish, spoon, or knife!

Lorinne Z.
Age 12, New York





Home Recycler

This home paper recycler lets you recycle any paper product and turns it into beautiful stationery, origami, and notebooks.

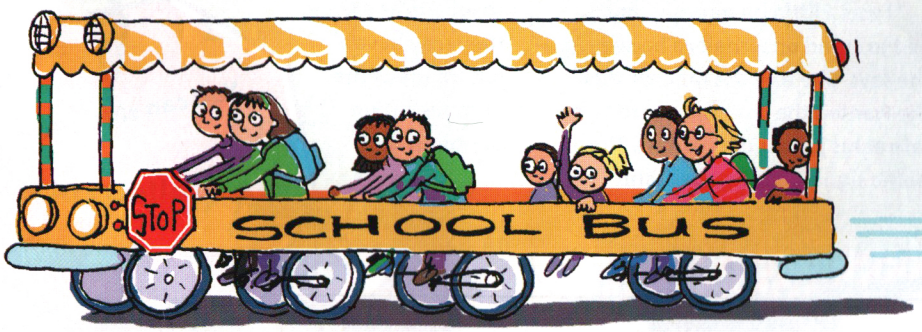
Meghan C.
Age 13, Florida



Recycled Clothes

This outfit includes a pressed soda-can jacket, a paper-clip shirt, a juice-pouch purse, notebook paper pants, newspaper boots, a bottle-cap necklace, and a rubber-band hat.

Sarah K.
Age 10, New Jersey





The Bike-Bus

The Bike-Bus lets kids get their daily exercise by biking to school. Also, the Bike-Bus doesn't use gas, so it doesn't pollute the air.

Madelyn B.
Age 12, Connecticut





RecycleBot 4000

This machine was designed to make people recycle more. When someone tries to throw away a recyclable product, it spits it back and says, "Try again!"

Katie P.
Age 12, Illinois

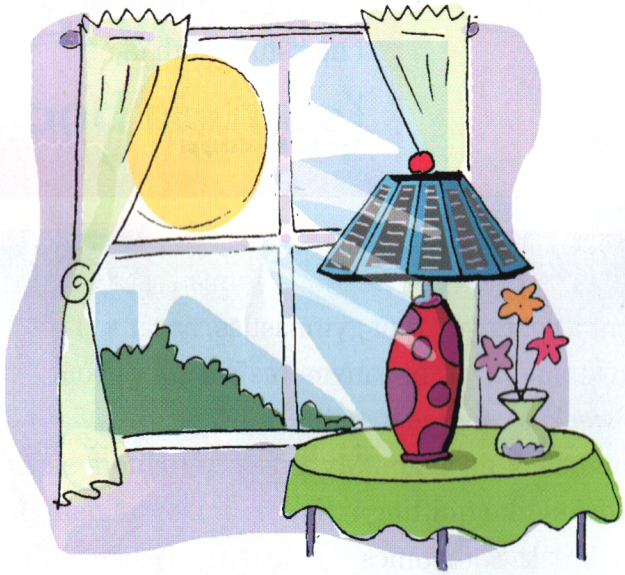


Paper-Growing Tree

From now on, we won't have to cut down trees to make paper because this tree GROWS paper!

Alexandra L.
Age 10, New York







Solar-Powered Lamp

Leave this lamp by the window all day, and it soaks up enough sunbeams to run all night.

Gigi A.
Age 13, Wyoming

New Contest: Halloween Costume Photos

We want to see your most clever Halloween costume ever! Find a photo of boo-tiful you dressed up for trick-or-treating, and send it in. The more creative or silly, the better! Send your photo to the address on page 2, along with your first and last name, address, and birth date. Deadline: April 10, 2005. Winners will appear in the September/October 2005 issue. Sorry, we can't return your photos.

For more Earth Day fun, test your recycling smarts with our quiz on page 30.

Illustrations: Lauren Scheuer

Quitting



Have you ever thought about quitting? What a tough decision! What advice do you have for girls who are trying to decide what to do?



Once I wanted to quit softball because none of my friends were on my team, but my dad wouldn't let me. He said that I would be letting the team down. So I stuck it out through the season and had so much fun! I became friends with everyone on the team!

Kathryn O.
Age 12, Connecticut



This year I quit dance because I didn't feel like having any after-school activities. Girls should make sure they're doing something because they want to, not because someone else wants them to.

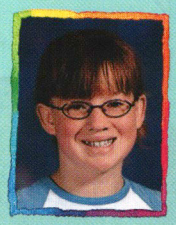
Grace H.
Age 10, California



I used to take piano lessons. When they got harder, I got frustrated and gave up. I told myself that it was because I couldn't keep up with my schoolwork, but it wasn't the truth. Now I wish I had stuck with it.

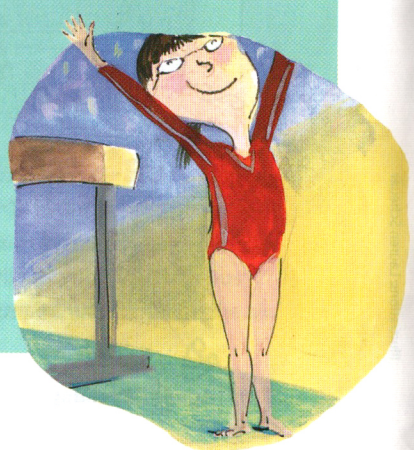
Katie R.
Age 10, Mississippi





About a year ago I quit gymnastics, because I didn't think it was fun anymore. But after about two weeks, I missed it and signed back up again. My advice to girls who feel like quitting is to just take a little break. Sometimes that's all you need!

Ashley P.
Age 13, Kansas





I got into band last year and loved it at first. But soon I got bored and it wasn't fun anymore, so I quit. I don't regret quitting at all. I think you have to do what your heart tells you is right.

Jessica C.
Age 13, Virginia

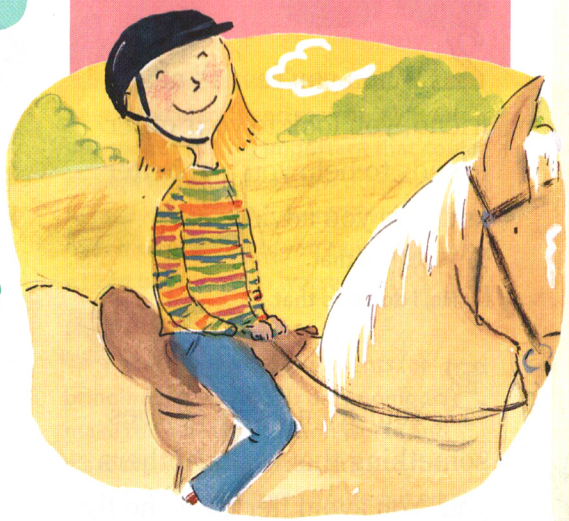


I stopped taking riding lessons, but that doesn't stop me from riding. Just because you quit lessons doesn't mean that you have to give up that activity completely.

Hartley B.
Age 10, Connecticut

Big Truth

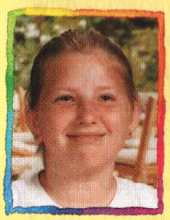
Your decision should be one that YOU feel good about.



Speak from Your Heart

Next subject: Teacher troubles. Have you ever had a teacher you weren't crazy about? Was she super strict or just not a lot of fun? What did you do to make the best of the situation? For girls who would give their teachers less than an A+, what tips do you have to get them through the year?

Send answers, name, birth date, and school photo to the address on page 2. Deadline: April 7, 2005. Some answers will appear in the September/October 2005 issue. ✦



I almost quit soccer because I worried that other people thought I was bad. But then I remembered: it doesn't matter what other people think.

Emily H.
Age 12, Illinois



Sometimes I feel like quitting piano. Practicing takes up a lot of time. But when I can play a whole song, I'm proud of myself and glad that I didn't quit.

Leah G.
Age 11, Georgia



Illustrations: Laura Cornell

Fighting Fair

Do you play by the rules when it comes to fights with friends? Take this quiz and see if you're a fair fighter.

by Patti Kelley Criswell

Quiz

Read each example and see whether it sounds like you.

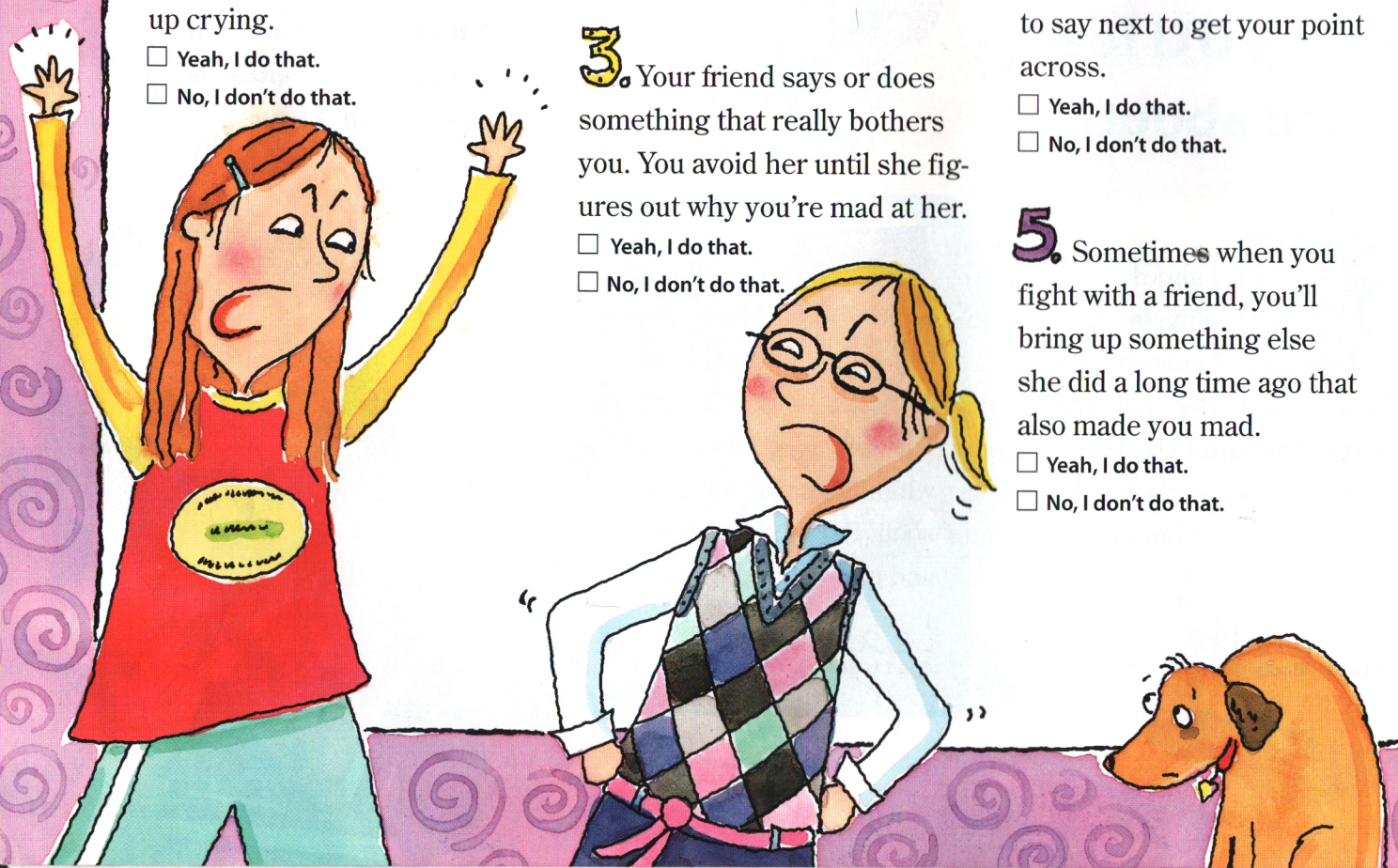
1. When you and a friend fight, you sometimes raise your voice and usually end up crying.
   - ☐ Yeah, I do that.
   - ☐ No, I don't do that.

2. When you're mad at a friend, you look to your other friends to help you feel better and give you advice.
   - ☐ Yeah, I do that.
   - ☐ No, I don't do that.

3. Your friend says or does something that really bothers you. You avoid her until she figures out why you're mad at her.
   - ☐ Yeah, I do that.
   - ☐ No, I don't do that.

4. When you argue with a friend, you're usually so angry that you can't really listen to her side of things. Instead, while she's talking, you plan what you're going to say next to get your point across.
   - ☐ Yeah, I do that.
   - ☐ No, I don't do that.

5. Sometimes when you fight with a friend, you'll bring up something else she did a long time ago that also made you mad.
   - ☐ Yeah, I do that.
   - ☐ No, I don't do that.





Answers

1. A loud voice and tears will get a person's attention, but they also keep that person from understanding the real reason you're upset. Try to express yourself as calmly as you can. If you're too upset to confront your friend right away, take some time to cool down before you talk to her. Remember, words said in anger can really hurt.

2. It's never a good idea to talk about your argument with other friends. If you have to discuss it with someone, talk to someone who is not involved, such as your cousin or your mom. Most important of all, after you're calm, talk to the friend you're mad at.

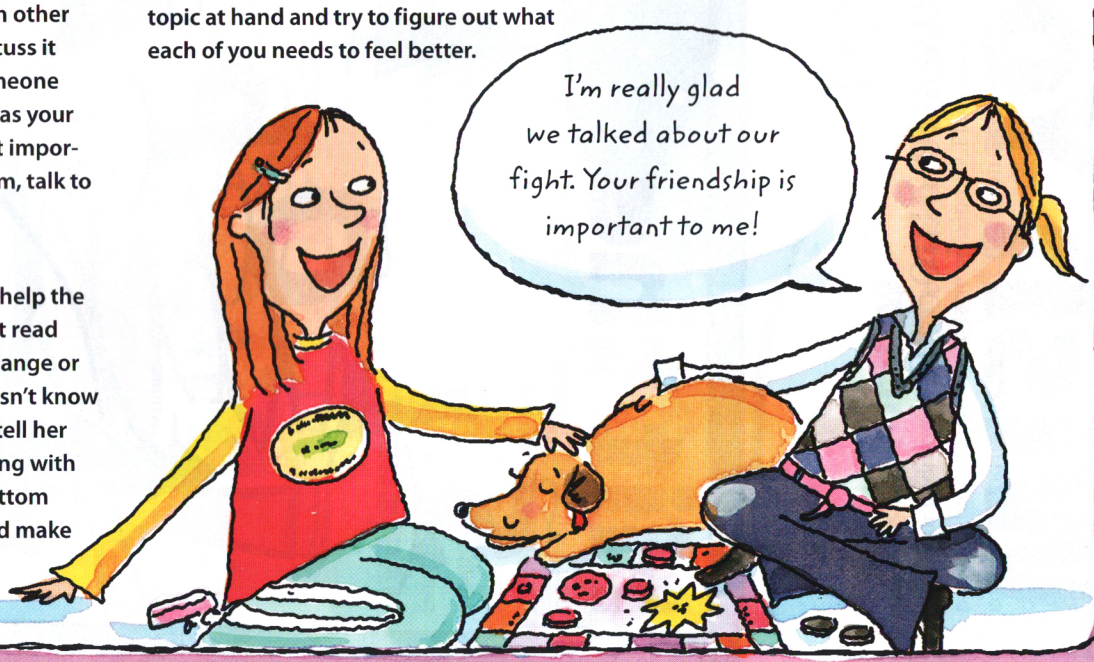
3. Staying silent won't help the situation. Your friend can't read your mind, so she can't change or fix the problem if she doesn't know what it is. Talk to her and tell her why you're upset. By talking with her, you can get to the bottom of what's bugging you and make things right again.

4. It's hard to listen when you're angry. But your friend may be trying to tell you something important that could change how you feel. Slow down and try to really listen to her point of view. If you hear it soon enough, you can often stop a fight before it gets worse.

5. Starting up old arguments (or bringing up the past) is only going to make the current situation worse and it's really not fair. Instead, stick to the topic at hand and try to figure out what each of you needs to feel better.

Remember

All friends fight sooner or later. No matter how an argument starts and no matter how silly or serious it is, most disagreements can be worked out. Knowing how to listen and talk—even when you're both really upset—not only will save your friendship, but also will make it stronger. ✦



Illustrations: Amanda Haley

Wish You Were Here!

Not going anywhere for spring break? Use these ideas to bring the vacation to you!

Hit the SLOPES!

Spend a week bundled up in the great indoors.



Lounge in the Lodge

After a day full of fun, relax in the living room with some hot chocolate. Put a piece of a peppermint patty in a cup of hot chocolate. Stir until melted and enjoy!

Make Your Mark

Design a logo for your own line of snowboards. Give it a fun name like "Becky's Bodacious Boards." Draw your logo on sticker paper (available at office supply stores) and put it on your notebook.



Avalanche!

Don't get buried by this balancing game. Collect a bunch of pillows from around the house. Take turns building a tower of pillows. The object of the game is to build the tallest tower without it tipping over. If the tower falls, yell "Avalanche!" The player who builds the tallest tower wins.

Matterhorn Sundae

Make a mountain of a sundae! Start with chocolate chips at the bottom of the bowl, followed by a scoop of Rocky Road ice cream. Add a "mudslide" of chocolate syrup and a pile of whipped cream "snow." Sprinkle flakes of coconut on top. Don't forget to add the gummy bear hikers.



Warm & Cozy

Make a simple scarf that's super cute! Cut a piece of polar fleece 10 inches wide and 4 feet long. Cut fleece into 1-inch strips lengthwise. Gather the strips together and secure in place with colorful hair elastics.

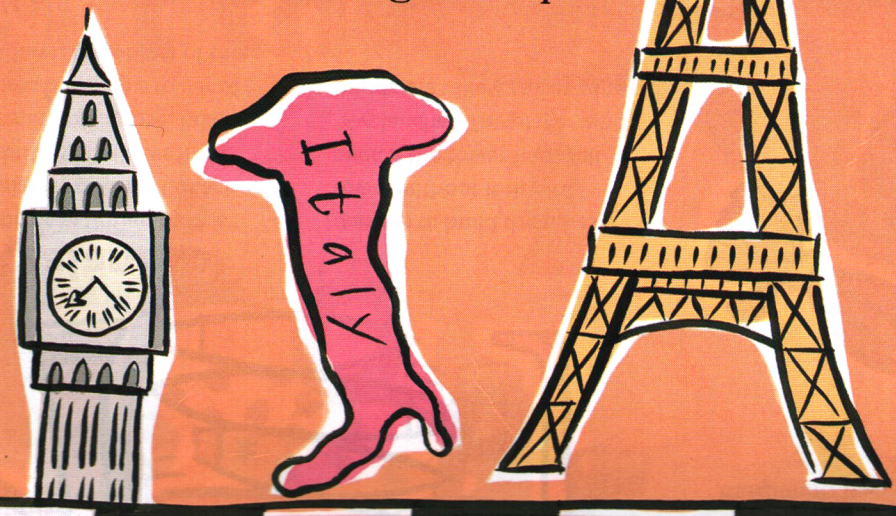
Wintry Window

Turn your bedroom into a winter wonderland. Cut white paper to look like snow and tape on window. Place white cotton batting (available at fabric stores) on top of your dresser and bookshelves to look like snowdrifts.

Illustrations: Mary Lynn Blasutta

European Vacation

Grab your passport and get ready for an adventure through Europe.



Lost Luggage

Fill two suitcases full of clothes. Hide a penny inside each suitcase. Divide into two teams. On "go," teams must open up their suitcases and search for the penny without letting any of the clothes touch the floor. The first team to find the coin wins. Continue to play, hiding the pennies again.





Passport to Fun

Make your own passport. Fold a few pieces of paper in half to make a small booklet. Print out a map of Europe from the Internet and paste it on the cover. Every time you complete an activity from a different country during spring break, write about what you did. Put a dot on the map to mark the country you visited. See how many countries you can "visit" in one week!



Translate This

Find a foreign language phrase book at your local library. Have everyone sit down around a table. Give players slips of paper and pens. The first "reader" finds a phrase in the book and says it out loud—for example, "Vorrei delle cartoline." The players must write what they think the phrase would mean if translated into English. In this example, the Italian phrase means "I would like some postcards." Then the reader reads each answer out loud. A point is given to the closest answer. Each person gets a chance to be the reader. The player with the most points at the end is the winner.



Photo Op

Cut out pictures from European travel brochures and magazines. Paste photos of friends and family onto a piece of paper along with the travel images. Make a collage of your Euro-venture.

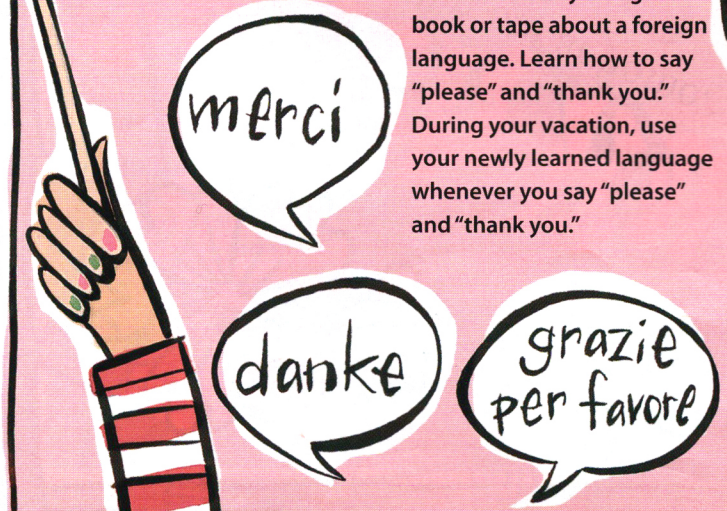


Wave Your Flag

Choose a country that you'd like to visit. Paint your nails in the colors of that country's flag.

Merci!

Go to the library and get a book or tape about a foreign language. Learn how to say "please" and "thank you." During your vacation, use your newly learned language whenever you say "please" and "thank you."



Teatime

Invite your friends over for a traditional English tea. Serve a variety of scones and mini sandwiches. Ask your mom or dad to serve tea (hot or iced) in pretty tea-cups. Don't forget to speak with an English accent!

Greet your friend in Italian by saying "ciao," pronounced "chow."

Beach Bums

Spend a week chillin' out at home.

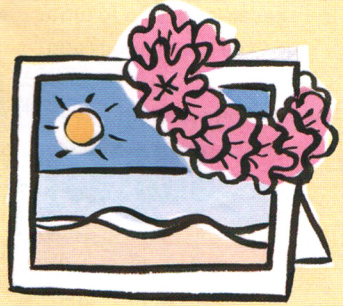
Hawaiian Haven

Add these tropical accents to your room:



Go to the craft store and buy a few fake Hawaiian flowers. Place them in a vase and put them on your windowsill.

Hang a lei around a picture frame.



Look through a travel magazine and cut out a picture of a beautiful beach. Put it in one of your frames during the week of spring break.

Beach Ball Bowling

Find your beach ball and start playing! Line up three rows of empty plastic water bottles (three in each row). Stand 15 feet away from the bottles. Take turns using the beach ball to knock down as many bottles as possible. The player who knocks down the most in one try is the winner.

Boogie Board

You've never danced like this before! One person is the judge and the rest are "boogiers." The boogiers must lie on the floor on their stomachs as if they were on body boards. The judge plays music and the boogiers dance—without letting their arms or legs touch the floor! Who can boogie the longest?





Bitty Beach

Make a mini beach scene. Clean out an empty candy tin. Fill the bottom with sand. Tape a picture of a beach to the open lid. Cut a small piece of ribbon for a towel and place in the sand. Add a paper drink umbrella and you have a tiny tropical scene!

Tropical Breeze

Get a taste of the islands. In a blender, combine 1/3 cup mango sorbet and 1/3 cup canned mandarin orange slices. Add 2/3 cup lemon-lime soda. Ask an adult to blend well. Bottoms up!

Beach Beauty

Wear sunglasses and flip-flops around the house. Put on scented sunscreen for a tropical aroma.

Beach Memory

See who has the best memory. Find beach items around the house, such as sunglasses, sunscreen, sandals, and goggles. Place the items under a beach towel. Have players sit around the towel. On "go," lift the towel up for 10 seconds so that players can see the items. Then put the towel back down over the items. Players have one minute to write down everything they saw (or as much as they can remember). The one who remembers the most is the winner!

Soak up the Fun

Sip your Tropical Breeze and watch beach movies while lying on beach towels and inflatable rafts.

Easter Egg-stravaganza

These decorative eggs are to dye for!



Quick tips!

* Cover your work surface with newspaper.
* Set your eggs on a cooling rack to let them dry.

Photos: Mike Walker



Cute Crayon

Doodle designs on egg with crayons. Press firmly with crayon while drawing. Dye egg in desired color. Let dry. For doodle ideas, turn to page 28!

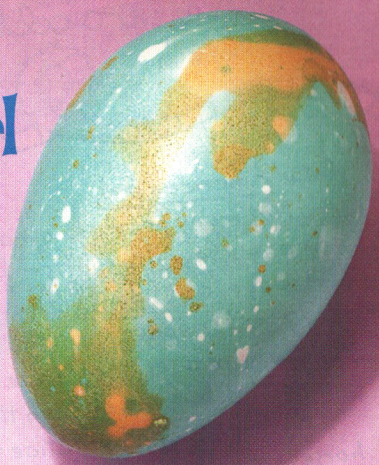


Band Made

Carefully stretch rubber bands around egg. Dye egg in desired color. Let dry completely. Carefully remove rubber bands.

Super Swirl

Add 1 tablespoon vegetable oil to each dye and stir. Dip egg into one color of dye quickly, then remove. Continue dipping for more intense color. Let dry before dipping in another color.



Stick to It

Place office dot stickers on egg. Dye egg in desired color. Let dry completely. Carefully peel off stickers to reveal polka-dot design.





Glittery Glam

Dye egg in desired color and let dry. Cover with glitter paint. Let dry. This egg is for decoration only, so don't eat it!



Sponge Dip

Put 5 drops of food coloring in a cup and add a few drops of water. Dip a sponge into dye and press onto egg. Let dry. Continue using other sponges with different colors. Let dry.

Horse Crazy

From teeny horses and wild horses to terrific books, art, and games, here's a roundup of horse *everything*.

"Reign of the stallion"





Brooke H.
Age 13, Virginia

Hobby horse vaulting

Dear American Girl,

Not many people know about one of my favorite sports—vaulting. It is so fun, and I do it with a group of my best friends—girls and horses. In vaulting, you perform a series of exercises, like in ballet or gymnastics, but you do it on the back of a horse!

My friends and I practice twice a week. The horses we ride are patient and steady, and they walk, trot, and canter in a circle. At the same time, we do our moves. We learn the moves on a barrel with legs before we try them on an actual horse. More advanced vaulters do pyramids and "scissors," where you lean forward, throw your legs back, and scissor them in the air. Sometimes we do routines to music.

It's fun to compete, too. At shows, we each wear a unitard and special ballet slippers with rubber on the bottom. But the real fun is just being together with my friends and the horses.

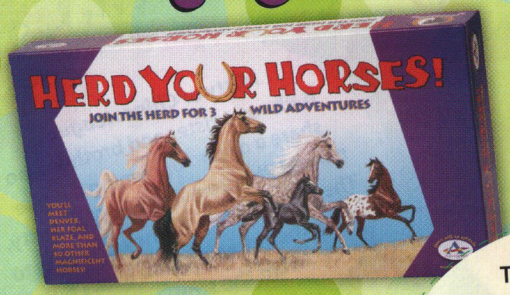


Sincerely,
Julia S.
Age 11, Maryland



Don't try this at home! Julia has had a lot of practice with Goldie.

Pony Games review

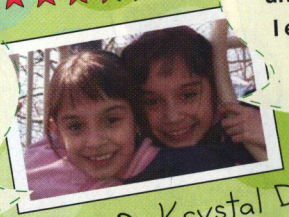


Herd Your Horses! $20

★★★★★

I think this game is worth the price because it was really fun and I learned a lot about different horses. I never saw horses so beautiful!

This game is colorful and easy to understand and play. I enjoyed it because I love horses!



Kristie D. Krystal D.
Age 11, New York

Hold your horses

CRAFT

Glue **magnets** to the backs of **small plastic horses.** Giddyup!





"Destiny"





Rica W.
Age 12, Texas

Win it!
horse stuff

You can win our **Horse Crazy prize pack** of games, books, and other cool stuff. **Plus,** we'll pay for the care of a rescued horse in your name! To find out how you can **win,** turn to page 2.

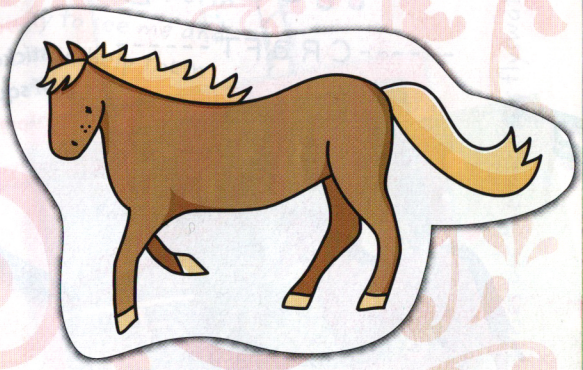
Horse treat

·c·r·u·n·c·h·!·

Your horse friend will love you for this: Fill a **flat-bottomed ice cream cone** with some **crunchy granola,** and let the horse munch away. Just remember to check with a horse's owner before you give any treats!







Photos: William S. Henry, Chris Hynes Illustrations: Lori Joy Smith

Wild horse

... CHINCOTEAGUE ...

Dear American Girl,

For as long as I can remember, I have loved horses and ponies. My mom took me to the annual pony swim in Chincoteague, Virginia—just like in the book Misty of Chincoteague!

It was so fun. My mom and I tried to win a pony through the raffle, but no luck. At the auction, I saw a tiny palomino pinto foal (creamy tan and white, like Misty). I couldn't stop thinking about that sweet little colt. I was sad when the auctioneer announced he was sold. But imagine my shock and excitement when I found out he had been sold ... to my mom! I couldn't believe he was mine.

He was so young (only four weeks old) that we had to leave him on the island with his mother. We got to see him again later in the year and made plans to bring him home. He and I have lots of fun ahead of us. I will help teach him to love people and, later, to be ridden.



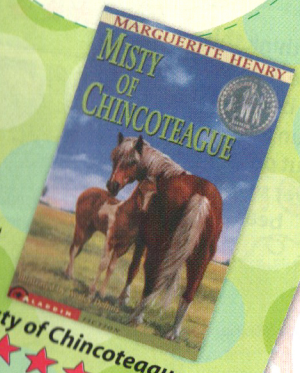
Sincerely,
Erin D.
Age 12, Georgia

Horse tales
review

Misty of Chincoteague is about a sister and brother who share a dream of owning a horse named Phantom and her foal, Misty. The book is their journey of trying to make their dream come true. I didn't want the story to end!



Danielle L.
Age 10, New York



Misty of Chincoteague, $5



Erin named her pony SeaMist.

Herd of horses
CRAFT

Put **horse stickers** on **scrapbook paper.** Cut out squares around stickers. Punch holes in corners of squares. String together using **colorful paper clips.**



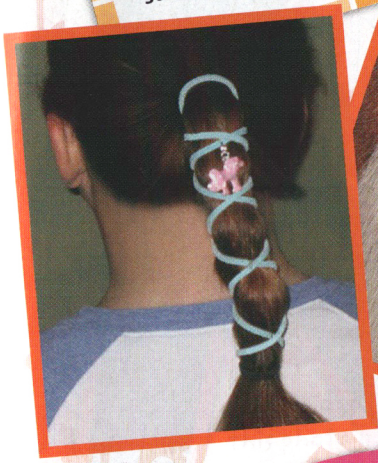




Ponytails

CRAFT

Tie a **strand of leather** around the base of the ponytail. Begin wrapping the leather around your hair in a crisscross pattern. Add a **horse charm** and continue wrapping. Secure leather strand at the bottom with a **hair elastic.**





"Dolly"





Hannah T.
Age 14, Georgia

Hospital horse

Dear American Girl,

My name is Petie, and I love kids. Part of my job is visiting them when they're sick and staying in the hospital.

Some kids get lots of visitors, but I'm a pretty unusual guest because I'm a miniature-horse-and-pony mix! I use the revolving door and the elevators on my hospital rounds twice a month.

I get a two-hour bath before I can visit the kids, and my handlers wrap my hooves and tail in tape to keep them clean on my way to the hospital. But it's all worth it. Most kids are really happy to see me and pet me, and I'm glad that I can help them forget their illnesses for a while.



I'm Petie

Petie looks shaggy when he's not clipped for his hospital visits.



Petie visits Brianna G. at the hospital.

Horses use their tails as flyswatters and to send signals to each other about how they are feeling.

Horse sense

Quiz

True or false?

1. A pony is a baby horse.
   True False
2. Some horses have feathers.
   True False
3. A hinny is a type of saddle.
   True False
4. Hooves are like fingernails—they're always growing.
   True False
5. Old horses get gray hair.
   True False

Answers are on page 27.

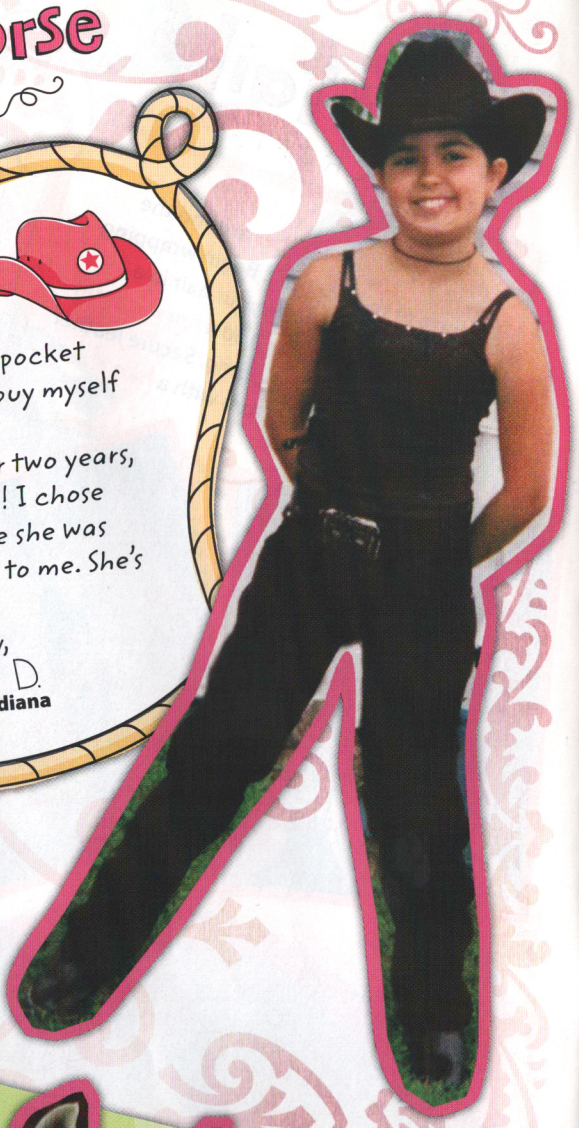
Quarter horse money

Dear American Girl,

For years, I wanted a horse. I asked my papa if I could collect his spare pocket change every day to help buy myself a horse, and he said O.K.

I collected change for two years, and I ended up with $800! I chose my horse, Charm, because she was gentle and came right up to me. She's really special!

Sincerely,
Tyler D.
Age 11, Indiana



The Mane Event review



Cowboy Magic Rosewater Shampoo, $7

★★★★★

This shampoo smells wonderful, and it made my hair extremely soft. It was great! Usually I have to use conditioner when I wash my hair, but with this shampoo I didn't!



Hannah Rose N.
Age 14, Kentucky

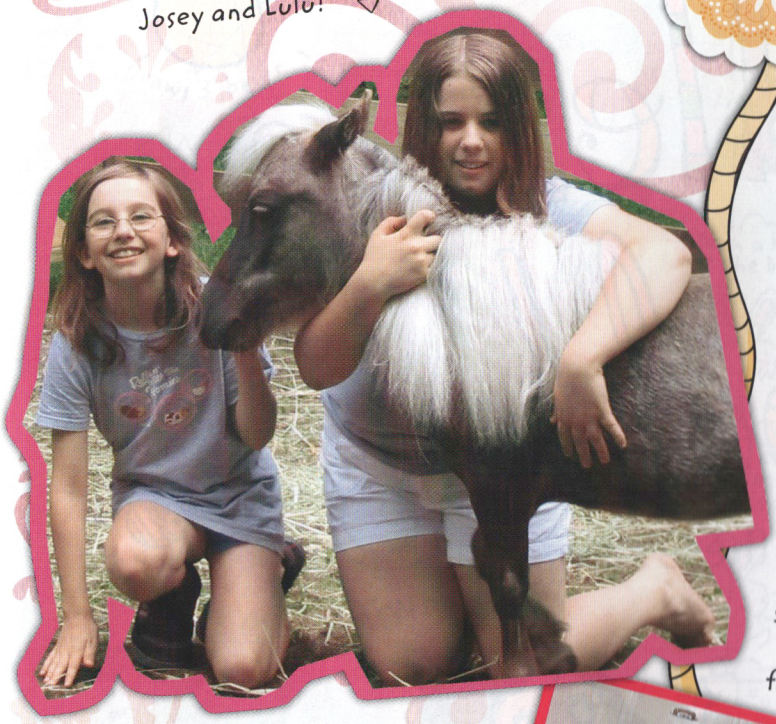
Right before Hannah Rose gave me a bath with this shampoo, I rolled into a mud puddle! I turned from gray to a dingy brown color. Amazingly, after my bath, I was silvery and shining!

This is Justin, Hannah Rose's horse.

Tiny horse

Meet Willow

Willow is almost the same size as Josey and Lulu!



Dear American Girl,

My sister, Josey, and I have a miniature horse named Willow. She's 27 inches tall at the withers (that's where the last hair of the mane is). She is one year old, and she's our own special baby. We worked really hard to save up all our money to buy her. My dad and I built a mini corral and a mini barn behind our house for her.

Willow loves eating and walking around the neighborhood. She is very smart and adventurous. She learned how to get on and off our porch. She also loves to wear her sneakers and explore in the house. We use sneakers meant for a stuffed bear—they fit her perfectly. She even wipes her feet on the doormat, but sometimes she tries to eat the mat.

We enjoy having Willow so much. She never fails to surprise us with a new trick.

Sincerely,



Lulu

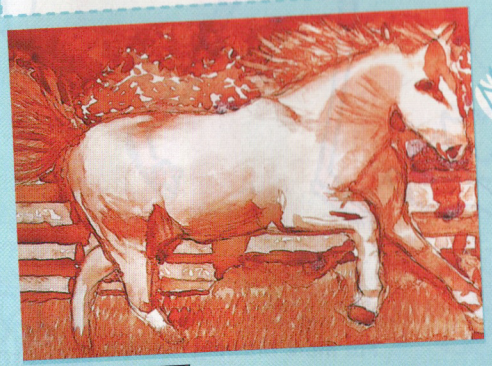
Age 12, Connecticut

Josey, age 10, took this photo of Willow in the kitchen.





"Speak for your heart"





Emma K.

Age 10, Missouri

answers

1. False. A pony is a type of horse, but its shorter height is what makes it a pony, not its age.
2. True! Feathers are the tufts of hair that grow around some horses' hooves.
3. False. A hinny is an animal born from a female donkey and a male horse.
4. True! Horses' hooves grow about a quarter of an inch per month. They must be trimmed, too.
5. True! Many horses get lighter around their muzzles as they get older, and gray horses can turn nearly white.

Oodles of Doodles

Show your colors with these springy drawings!

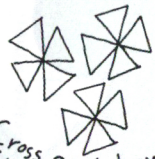


For more drawing fun, check out Doodle Studio, available in bookstores.

Rainbow Blooms



Draw 3 bows.



Cross each bow with another bow.



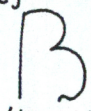
Place dots in the middle.



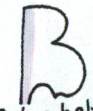
To make bows grow, add stems and leaves.

"Funny Bunnies"

Begin with a B



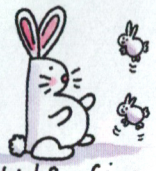
like this.



Attach a half-circle at the bottom.



Draw ears, a face, legs, and a tail.

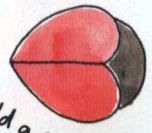


Add bouncing baby bunnies!

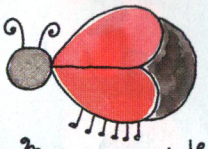
Little Ladybug



Draw a heart on its side.



Add a center line and a half-circle.

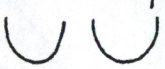


Make a head, legs, and antennae, too.



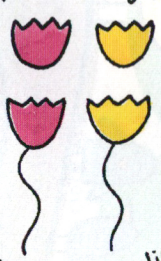
Add a smile and spots. Now fly away home!

Two Tulips



Draw two U's.

Add two zigzag tops.



Make two curvy lines.



B-ter-fly



Begin with a B.

Attach a backward B.





Make a small head with antennae.

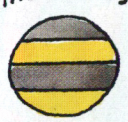


Buzzin' Bee



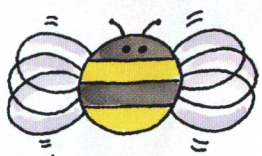
Start with a circle.

Add lines across it.



Make bee-dy eyes and tiny antennae.





A bee can't buzz without wings.

Illustrations: Amanda Haley

Quiz

Recyclopedia

In honor of Earth Day, take this quiz to find out if you're a recycling whiz!

How long?

Match each item to the amount of time it can take for it to decompose.

1. A paper bag — 500 years
2. An aluminum can — 1 million years
3. A plastic bottle — a month
4. A glass bottle — 700 years

Higher or Lower?

The numbers in the following statements are wrong. Guess if the actual amount is **higher** or **lower.**

5. Americans use two million plastic bottles every hour.
higher

6. Americans throw away half the plastic bottles they use.
higher

7. It takes 100 recycled plastic bottles to make one fleece jacket.
Lower

True or False?

Guess whether each statement is **true** or **false.**

8. One tree with a trunk 10 inches thick can produce a thousand sheets of paper.
True **False**

9. The average American throws away more than four pounds of trash every day.
True **False**

10. More people are recycling bottles and cans today than ever before.
True **False**

Answers

1. It can take a month for a paper bag to break down. Plastic bags take even longer. The best option is a reusable cloth bag.

2. It can take 500 years for an aluminum can to break down. Think about this: You could watch three hours of TV with the energy saved from recycling just one aluminum can.

3. It can take 700 years for a plastic bottle to break down. If you recycle the bottle, it can be made into useful fleece fabric.

4. It can take a million years—or longer—for a glass bottle to break down. The amount of energy saved by recycling a glass bottle could keep a light bulb lit for four hours or longer.

5. Higher. Americans use four million plastic bottles an hour.

6. Higher. On average, Americans throw away three out of four plastic bottles they use.

7. Lower. It takes about 25 bottles to make a fleece jacket.

8. False. A tree that size could produce six thousand sheets of paper. If Americans recycled all their Sunday newspapers, they could save half a million trees in one week.

9. True. In your lifetime, you will throw away more than 600 times your weight in trash!

10. False! The number of bottles and cans ending up in the trash is increasing. Next time you're tempted to just toss that drink container, think twice. What's good for the planet is good for you, too. ✦

Illustrations: Maranda Maberry

A tree can remove up to 60 pounds of pollution from the air every year.



Venus, Tara, and the Big Game

by Teresa Cotsirilos

Without their star player, the Fat Chance Barracudas can't possibly win. Or can they?

Venus Lozano was perfect. She was the prettiest girl in our school. Her history project on Iceland was so good that it was published in the local paper. She had enough friends to pack a baseball stadium. She could juggle a soccer ball on her knees and her forehead for three minutes without letting the ball bounce. "What a sweet girl," the grown-ups always said. "Now, she is a girl who's going places."

Grown-ups. They never really know anything about anything. When Venus walked down the halls at school, she walked straight down the middle with her nose turned up, forcing younger kids to get out of her way. When Venus played soccer, she never passed unless she had to. When anyone asked her what her name was, she always gave a saucy toss of her pearly-shampoo-commercial hair and replied, "Venus Lozano. Yes, that's Venus, just like the goddess of love." Venus Lozano was the queen of The Popular Crowd, so, naturally, no one really liked her very much. But Venus was the star of our school soccer team, the Fat Chance Barracudas, so we put up with her.





Coach stopped putting up with her, however, two days before the Big Game.

The Big Game was bigger than the World Series, the Super Bowl, and the World Cup all globbed together. As far as any middle-school soccer player was concerned, the outcome of the Big Game could create hurricanes, cause global warming, and change the course of our lives. Whoever won the Big Game was the champion middle-school girls' soccer team. Period.

The Fat Chance Barracudas had never made it to the Big Game before. Coach said that we'd made it this year because we were all very talented and knew how to work together. But we all knew that we'd gotten there because of perfect Venus.

All went well enough at practice that day, and we were feeling pretty good about the Big Game until Venus told Coach that she couldn't come to the next practice.

I'd been packing up my gym bag and paused to listen. Coach raised her eyebrows at Venus. "Oh? And why might that be, chica?" Coach called everybody *chica,* which means "girl" in Spanish. I liked it, but it drove Venus crazy. That might be why I liked it so much.

Illustrations: Cathi Mingus

Venus tossed her perfect hair and smiled sweetly. "My friend Aster invited me to her brother's school musical—I'm going to go see it with her. Sorry," she said, but she wasn't.

Coach eyed her hawkishly. "Venus," she said, "you know the rules. You aren't allowed to miss more than four practices in a season. You've already missed four."

Venus laughed. "Yeah, but I already told my friends I'd go."

"Your teammates are your friends, too," Coach said. She paused and frowned at Venus. "Look," she said, "if your musical is more important to you than this team, hand in your uniform and go home."

"You don't mean that," Venus said quickly. "You need me on the Barracudas!"

"I don't need you any more than I need the other players," Coach said coolly.

Venus's cheeks flushed. "You know what would happen to this team if I wasn't on it!" she said.

Coach wrinkled her nose at Venus very faintly. "I think we'd get along, chica. Sorry."

Venus turned in her jersey. She went to the musical the next night.



I couldn't help being proud of Coach for what she'd said. It takes real guts to say, "Sorry, chica," to Venus Lozano, even if you're a tough-as-nails Guatemalan refugee like Coach is. But, nevertheless, without Venus, the Big Game was as good as lost already.

We didn't know what the repercussions of our loss would be. Maybe the polar ice caps would melt. Maybe a tornado would rip through Chicago. Maybe it would hail across the country, and the hailstones would be bigger than basketballs.

At practice the next day, Coach told us not to worry about it. "Venus is not our whole team," she said. "A team has lots of different people in it. We do not depend on Venus." Then she announced who Venus's replacement on offense would be. "Tara Mistry will take Venus's position," Coach said, and Tara shyly walked out of the locker room.



"I'm really glad to be here," Tara said. She said it so softly, we could barely hear her.

Tara Mistry was the only ten-year-old on the team. She was skinny and gangly with Coke-bottle glasses, and she wore goggles over her glasses to keep them from breaking. She was less than four feet tall. This was her first year playing soccer. Ever.

"O.K.," Coach said, "let's practice. Here you go, Tara." She passed Tara the ball. Tara tripped over it and fell flat on her face.

It was a very, very long practice. We kept passing the ball to the right, expecting Venus to be there, to tear up the field and score without passing to any



of us, and to make us love and hate her all at once. Tara missed the ball. Every time.

"Everyone messes up sometimes," Coach said to her. "You nervous, chica?"

Tara's teeth chattered. She shakily adjusted her goggles. "Yeah."

Coach let her face slip into one of her rare smiles. "Loosen up. You're doing fine."

The practice lumbered on. I got the ball and flew up the field. Tara was cowering by the sideline. Everyone had forgotten about her, so she was wide open. "Tara!" I shouted and kicked the ball her way. "Pass!"

Tara caught the ball with her hands.

The Fat Chance Barracudas were engulfed in silence. Tara turned the color of a ripe tomato. She looked like she wanted to melt into the field. She dropped the ball and tried to kick it back to me. Her aim was off, and I had to run to get it. "Sorry," Tara whimpered and nervously adjusted her goggles again. "That was stupid."

She did it again ten minutes later. "You're not allowed to use your hands in soccer," I told her, as kindly as I could.

"I know," she mumbled miserably. "I'm sorry!"

Oh yes. We were toast.

It was dark when practice finally ended. My teammates trudged to the locker room with their shoulders hunched like defeated soldiers. "It's over," I heard one of the defenders whisper. "We've as good as lost the game already!"

"I'd rather have a jerk like Venus on the field than Tara," her friend agreed.

Coach heard this, and the wrinkles in her face somehow became more defined. Her eyes were clamped, her jaw was locked. I had never seen her so upset. "We'll work around her," I told her quietly.

"I'd rather have a jerk like Venus on the field than Tara."



Coach's brow furrowed even more. "Work around who?" she asked.

"Tara. Don't worry about it—I'll cover the right side of the field and the center of the field, and we'll make do."

Coach sighed and shook her head, annoyed. "If I played soccer that way, then I wouldn't have

kicked Venus off the team," she said. "Everyone gets to play."

"But what about the Big Game?" I blurted out. "Who knows what could happen if we lose! The Earth could get hit by a meteor—that's how the dinosaurs went extinct, wasn't it?"



"This is a team sport," Coach said. She didn't deny the meteor thing, though. She was quiet for a moment. Then, slowly, she smiled. "I have a great idea," she said. She got up. "I have to go, chica. Do me a favor and find Tara, will you? I think she's crying in the bathroom." She walked away.

Tara wasn't in the bathroom. She was behind it, kneeling in the mud, crying quietly into her arms. I didn't really know what to do, because I'm always really bad at these kinds of things. I stood there and watched her for a while, waiting for her to notice me and cursing Coach for leaving me to do this. Her "great idea" had better be worth it.

Tara looked up. She tried to force a grin, but it came out as a grimace instead. "I'm sorry," she muttered. She wiped her eyes. "I'm being stupid."

I awkwardly sat down next to her. "We're all nervous," I said. "It's O.K."

"No, it's not!" Tara said. "I'm terrible! This is my first year playing soccer, and I stink like Brie cheese!" I opened my mouth to deny it, but Tara cut me off. "Oh, go on, say it! Lie and say I'm not that bad. That's what Coach has been doing all day!" She closed her eyes and swallowed. "I'm terrible. I just want to go home."

Now it was my turn to say something, and my mind went blank. What are you supposed to say to that when it's pretty much true? "Well," I said slowly, "what's the worst that can happen?"

Tara sniffed. "We lose," she said bitterly.

"So, that's not the end of the world, is it?" I said. "There are more important things than losing the Big Game. Like…" I tried to think. Soccer is everything to me, and the Big Game is what I live for. But I wasn't about to tell Tara that. "Like pizza," I said weakly. "Pizza's pretty important. And…and the team's more important than the game. It's just a game, right?"

"But it's not just a game!" Tara wailed. "It's the Big Game!"

"It's still a game," I said. "I mean, there are bigger things out there to worry about. Like…volcanoes. Volcanoes are bad news. Worry about volcanoes instead." I sounded pretty dumb, and I knew it.

"But I'm never going to be as good as Venus!" Tara wailed.



"Venus," I informed her, "is a total snob. You're already better than she is." We were quiet for a moment and sat and watched the field, listening to the wind whistling through the goal nets.

"Pizza's more important," Tara mumbled finally.

I grinned. "That's the spirit." I helped her up and we walked home.

The Big Game came. We were playing the Santa Guadalupe Bobcats, who had won the Big Game three years in a row. Coach announced that Tara was going to be goalie. I couldn't believe we'd have someone like Tara Mistry between our goal and the Bobcats, especially when she'd never played goalie before. "Coach," I muttered when I was able to catch her alone, "I don't think Tara's over four feet tall."

"Of course she is," Coach said smoothly. "She's four foot three."

"Coach, I'm serious. How's she going to block the ball if someone shoots it in the upper corners of the goal? She's like a munchkin—"

"You have something against short people, chica?" Her voice grew sharp. I blushed, muttering an apology. Coach is a bit vertically challenged herself.

The bleachers were packed with parents and fans, and there was Venus Lozano, propped up against the water fountains, glaring at us as we warmed up. "She's going to laugh like a hyena when I screw up," Tara said hollowly, staring bleakly at Venus. Venus glared back. "She is, isn't she? She's going to talk about me at school." This, unfortunately, was very true.

"Pizza's more important," I reminded her. Tara hyperventilated and shivered visibly, nervously adjusted her goggles, and fidgeted with the sweaty yellow goalie's shirt she wore. I wanted to tell her it was gonna be O.K., but it probably wasn't, and I don't like to lie. Then the ref blew the whistle. The game was on.

It was amazing how quickly the Bobcats tore down the field. They had a girl with the number 34 on the back of her jersey, and I immediately saw that she was a lot like Venus—her team passed her the ball, and she dribbled all the way up the field by herself. Within the first five minutes, Number 34 kicked the ball directly at the goal and the ball rocketed toward the upper left corner. Tara jumped—and caught it. The crowd went wild, but we all just stared at her.

"How'd you do that?" I demanded.

Tara's eyes were very round. She adjusted her glasses again. "I…I don't know."

"Venus is a total snob. You're already better than she is."

"What do you mean you don't know? You just jumped like some sort of grasshopper. I've played soccer for three years and can't do that!"

"Did I mess up again?" she asked anxiously. "I did, didn't I?"

"Tara!" Coach hollered from the sidelines. She gave her a big thumbs-up. "Yeah, chica! Chicaaaa!" I glanced at Venus. She looked like she was sucking on a warhead candy.

The Big Game carried on. Tara jumped, dove, pounced, and fell, and the ball never got past her. Then we scored. "Arriba, arriba, chicas!" Coach screamed, and she was jumping up and down. I looked over at the water fountains to shoot a nasty



grin at Venus, but she'd left.

With only one minute left in the game, Number 34 had the ball. She kicked. The ball soared, and there was no way to stop it. The crowd screamed. Tara leaped again.

Tara hit her nose against the goalpost when she fell, and it bled down the front of her jersey in waterfalls. She scraped her cheek and bruised the entire right side of her body. She slid so deeply into the mud and soggy grass that she swallowed a mouthful of it, and later she actually begged Coach to wash her mouth out with soap. She broke her glasses. And her goggles.

The ball was curled in her arms.

The ref blew the whistle. The Big Game was over, and the Fat Chance Barracudas exploded. "Yes!" Coach leaped into the air. "Yes! Yes!" We ran screaming to Tara and hugged her enthusiastically all at once, falling in one big heap on top of her. She bled all over us, but we didn't care. Coach cried. Tara wiped her bloody nose on her sleeve and grinned at me.

"There is no way that pizza's more important than this," she said.



The pizza was still pretty good, though, at the party we had afterward. Coach took us to her place, a slanted one-story house with an endless number of cats. She got Tara cleaned up and gave her some new clothes. They were about ten sizes too big, of

course, since Tara's so tiny. Then Coach told us all how proud she was and handed out the medals we'd won. They were chipped and plastic and said "Made in China" on the back, but that didn't matter to any of us.

At exactly 4:37 P.M., the doorbell rang. I opened the door. There stood Venus Lozano. She was holding a big pink box. "I brought cookies," she said.

I bit my lip. "You weren't invited," I said. I knew it was rude as soon as I'd said it, but I didn't really know if I cared.

"I know," said Venus. She looked down and shuffled her feet in place. "Congratulations," she said quietly, eyeing the medal around my neck.

"Who's there?" asked Tara. She saw Venus and the bottom of her smile fell out. Venus cleared her throat and shoved the cookie box into my hands. Then she turned and trudged down the steps as we watched her go.

"Hey! Chica!" We turned around. So did Venus. Coach was standing behind us. "You can stay," she said to Venus.

"Really?" Venus asked.

"Really?" Tara and I asked and looked at Coach like she was crazy.



"Yeah," Coach said. "Come on in. We won't mind. Well, yeah, we will, but we'll get over it. I got too many pizzas and need some help finishing them off—I don't want any leftovers."

"Hope the musical was good enough to miss the Big Game for," I said stiffly.

Venus grinned weakly. "Terrible, actually. Total waste of time."

"Come on," Coach said, "the team's waiting."

Venus looked apprehensively at Tara. "Sure," Tara said, "come on in." And we walked into Coach's living room together. ✦

Meet the Author



Teresa Cotsirilos

Teresa won AG's short-story contest—twice! Now she's in high school and still writes great stories. We asked her to share some writing tips with you.

"For me, there are two big things. One is always, always write about something you care about. This is why a lot of writers write about things based on their own lives—the more the characters and what they experience matter to you, the better the writing becomes. Even if you're not writing about yourself, make sure that you're still enthusiastic and engaged in whatever your characters are doing.

"The second big thing: Turn off the TV and read. I probably watch only an hour or two of TV a week. Reading is incredibly important if you want to be a writer, because your favorite books can show you how to write a better story."

To read Teresa's two contest-winning stories, go to "Magazine" at americangirl.com.

Brainwaves

activities and puzzles

Party Panic

The message read: "Party tonight." Your brother answered the phone but can't remember who called. (And you have a long list of friends!) Thanks to your decoding skills, you need just six answers to narrow your list to one name. Read the questions, then cross off names in the address book to see who invited you.

1. Did the name sound like a flower? **Uh-uh.**
2. Was it the name of a state capital? **I don't think so.**
3. Did you hear "Ben" or "Sam" anywhere in the name? **No.**
4. Did the name rhyme with Penny? **No way.**
5. Did the name have the same first and last letter? **Nope.**
6. Did it sound like something you can do, like Archer? **Nah.**



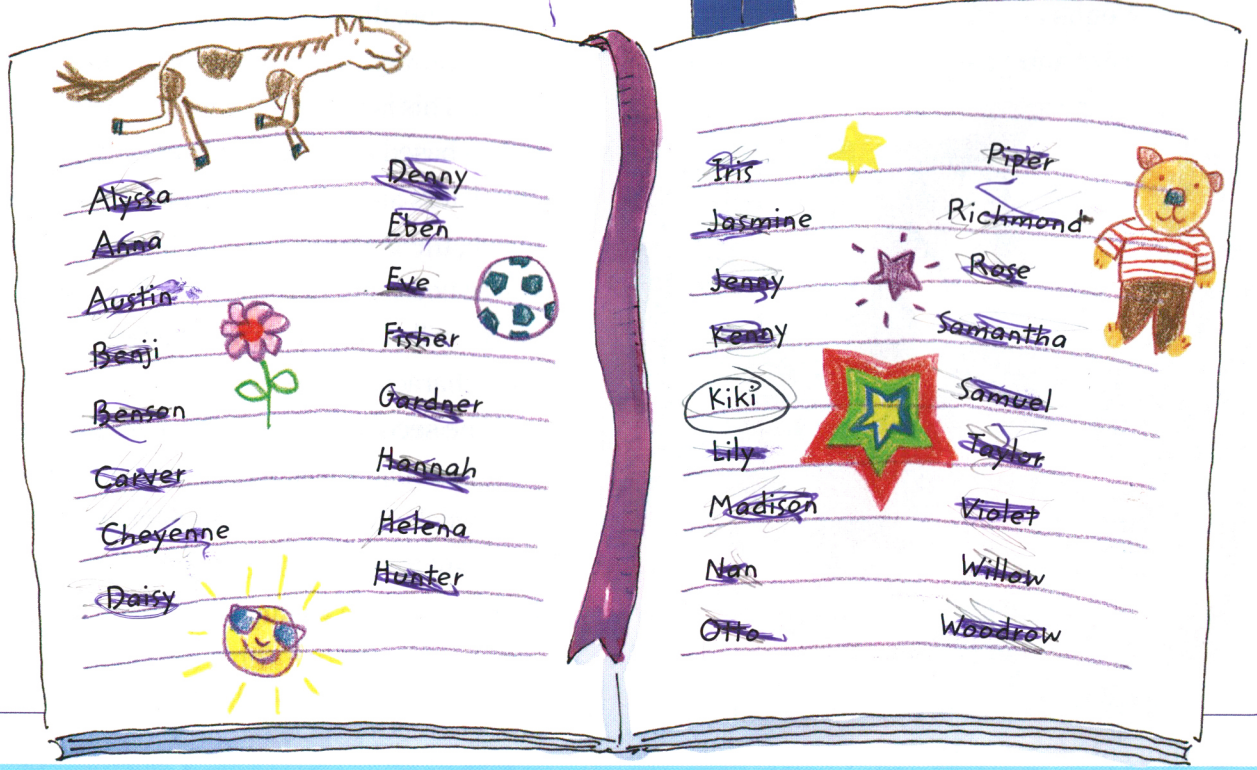
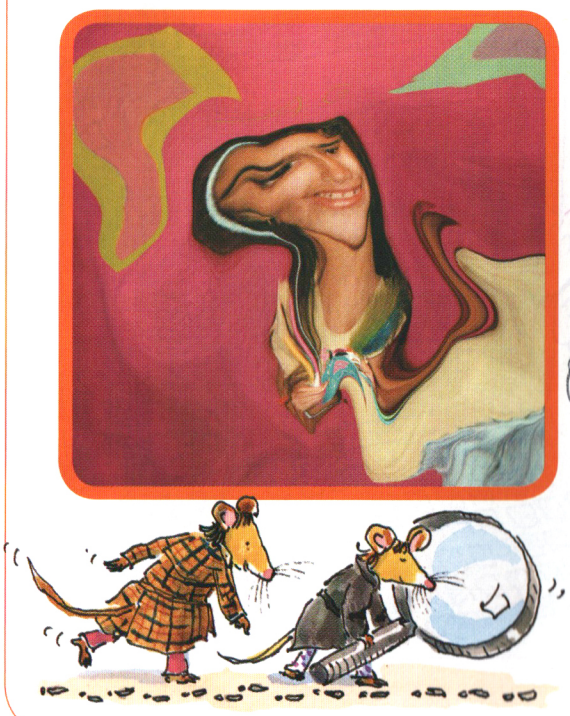


Photo Fun

Use your detective skills to match the blurry photo on the far left to the original sent in by Sarah O., age 10, from New York.





A.



B.

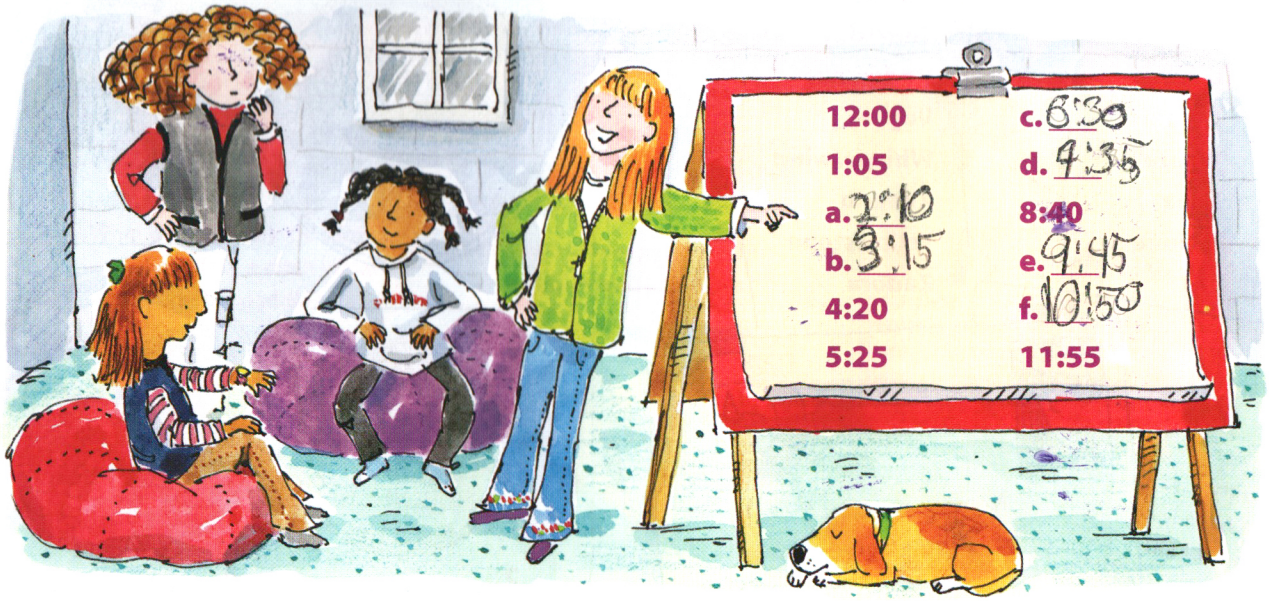


C.

Send a **print** of your fun or funny photo to **Brain Waves** and maybe we'll use it in a **puzzle.** Write to the address on **page 2.** Sorry, photos can't be returned.

Clock Case

Someone in town pulled a prank every hour at a specific time. Write down the times when the other capers occurred. **Hint:** Think of a clock face!



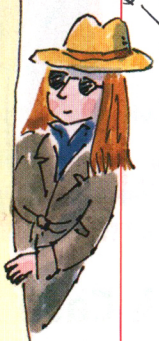
Illustrations: Paul Meisel

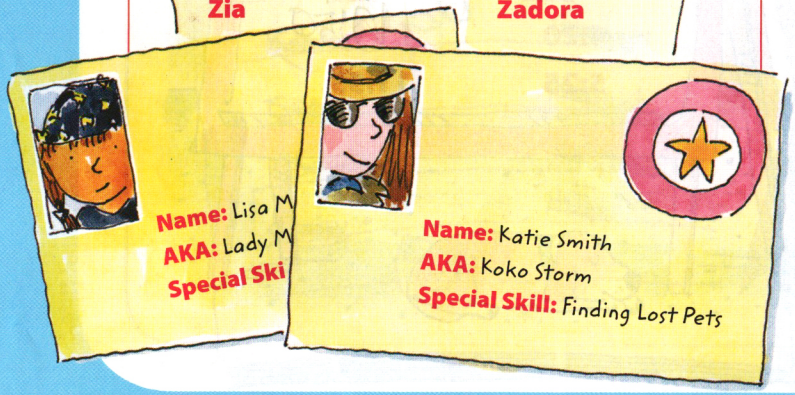
Secret Name

Psst! Every detective needs a special secret agent name. To find yours, match your first and last initials to the names in the columns.

Ace	Austin
Belinda	Bond
Carlotta	Casablanca
Danni	Diamond
Evita	Escapade
Fiona	Flowers
Goldie	Goldenrod
Hydra	Harlow
Ivana	Ironside
Jesse	Jewel
Koko	Kita
Lady	Labelle
Misty	Moon
Nakita	Nevada
Orlean	Ocean
Piper	Powers
Queenie	Quicksilver
Ruby	Rich
Savannah	Storm
Trina	Thursday
Ursula	Undercover
Veronica	Vegas
Wynter	Whisperwind
Xena	Xanadu
Yvonne	Yellowstone
Zia	Zadora

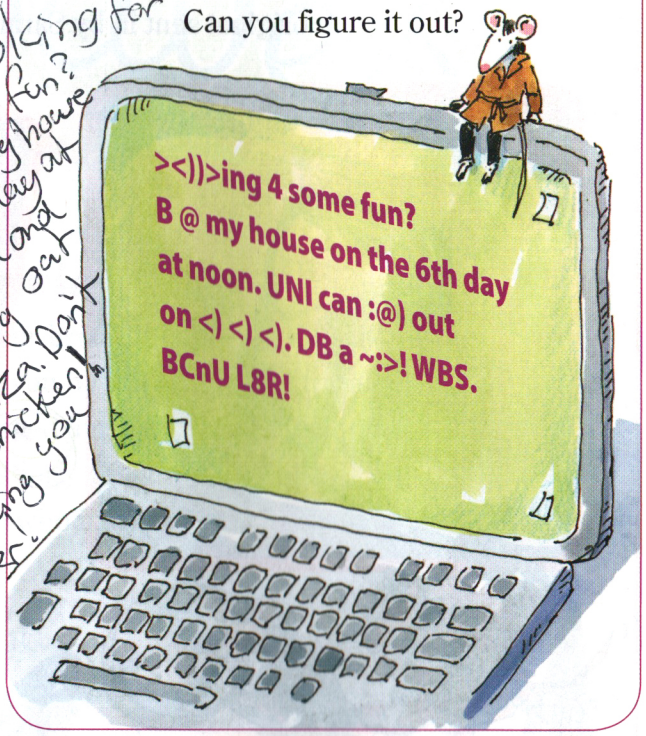






Crack the Code

A friend e-mailed you an invitation. Can you figure it out?



Coin Clues

How observant are you? See if you can remember which state is represented by each of these state quarters.



1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____



Fingerprint Found!

Someone pulled a prank but left a fingerprint! Does it match any of these known pranksters' prints?



Fingerprints



1. Lotta Laughs



2. Pulla Gag



3. D. Liteful



4. Dixie Trix



5. She Nanigans



6. A. Caper



7. Ms. Chievous



8. Hi Jinks



9. Auntie Antic



10. Ima Silly



11. Hugh Morris



12. Zane E. Mann

Laffateria

The detective could see a red house built out of red bricks and a blue house built out of blue bricks, but she couldn't see a green house! Why?



Because it was built out of glass!

Gabi S.
Age 12, Tennessee

What did the girl say when she saw her picture on the wall at the police station?



I've been framed!

Gianna C.
Age 10, Ohio

The detective found Sandy lying in a puddle of water surrounded by broken glass. Luckily, there were no cuts on her. What had happened?



Sandy is a fish and her bowl fell off the table and broke.

Virginia P.
Age 11, Georgia

What does Scooby-Doo say when he falls in a ditch while holding a paddle?



Rut-row!

Gabby R.
Age 12, New Hampshire

What asks no questions but requires many answers?



The doorbell!

Kelly M.
Age 13, Florida

Funny Business

Send your best joke to Brain Waves! Write to the address on page 2. Include your name, birth date, school photo, and signature.



Can You Do It?

Use your secret agent skills to do these challenges.

Motion Detector

Loosely tie a string around your arm, then tie the end of the string to a pencil so the pencil dangles from your elbow. Hold the pencil in your hand. On "Go!," let the pencil drop and see how quickly you can sink it into a soda bottle. You can't touch the pencil or string to steady it! Our staff sunk the pencil in an average of 12 seconds.

I made my move in _____ seconds.





Detective Dig

Fill up a paper bag with various small objects from the yard or house. Each player sticks her hand into the bag (no peeking!), then secretly writes down on a sheet of paper as many objects as she can identify in one minute. The player who can guess the most wins. Keep track of time, because if it's a tie, the one who guesses all the objects fastest is the winner.

Best detective: _____



Measure Up

Give a friend a ball of yarn and keep one for yourself. Point out an object across the room or yard, such as a basketball. Each of you cuts a piece of yarn that you think will fit perfectly around that object. Now measure. The closest one to being correct keeps both strings. Now try another object. The one with the most strings after five tries wins.

_____ is wise about size!

Answer Box

Party Panic
Kiki invited you. Don't forget to call her back to confirm!

Photo Fun
A—If you look closely, you can see the craft project Sarah's holding!

Clock Case
a. 2:10; b. 3:15; c. 6:30; d. 7:35; e. 9:45; f. 10:50. The pranks occurred when both hands on the clock were in the same spot.

Crack the Code
Fishing for some fun? Be at my house on Saturday at noon. You and I can pig out on pizza. Don't be a chicken! Write back soon. Be seeing you later!

Coin Clues
1. Connecticut 2. New Jersey 3. Iowa 4. Kentucky

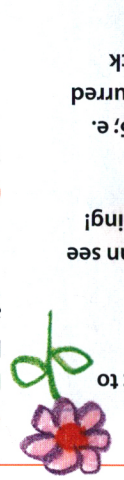


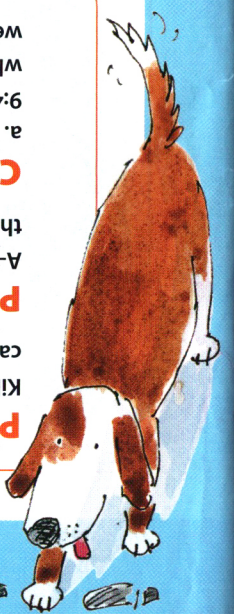
Fingerprint Found
Number 8—Hi Jinks is up to her tricks again!

Buzzword
Tomfoolery is used . . . nowhere in the magazine! April Fools'!

Behind the Scenes
You'll find 59 horses and one miniature donkey in this issue!







HELP!

Dear *American Girl,*

Recently I babysat two little girls. Everything they wanted to do, like jumping on their trampoline, I wasn't comfortable letting them do under my supervision. I felt like the bad guy telling them "no" all the time, but I wanted them to be safe. Help!

Confused sitter

Your number-one job as a babysitter is to make sure the kids stay safe. When you feel that something is too dangerous, you're right to say no. A lot of kids will ask their sitters to let them do things they *know* their parents wouldn't let them do. So don't feel bad saying no. When it happens, offer to play a board game with the kids or read them a story instead. Do something fun—and safe.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

My mom and I fight a lot over cell phones. I'm 11 and she thinks I'm not responsible enough to have one. But everyone in my class has one! How do I convince her to get me one?

phoneless



Whining to your mom that everyone but you has a cell phone is a sure way to show her that you *aren't* mature enough to have one. Instead, you could point out the benefits of having one. You'll always be able to reach each other no matter where you are, and your home phone will be free for other people to use. But before you talk to Mom again, think hard about whether you really *need* a cell phone, or just want one so you can fit in.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

I was invited to two parties on the same day! I've known the girls for equal amounts of time, and they asked me on the same day. Both parties sound like fun. What can I do?

UNDECIDED

Flip a coin to decide which party to attend. Whichever one you choose, make sure you let the other girl know how sorry you are that you won't be able to make it to hers. Don't tell her that you're going to another party—just say you already have plans, and invite her to do something special with you another time.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

My best friend is in third grade and is a year younger than I am. Some of my fourth-grade friends say I can't be friends with her because of that. Help!

Torn

If you limit yourself to having only friends who are exactly the same age as you are, you'll miss out on a lot of fun. Remember: You are the one who decides who your friends are. If these girls don't want to be friends with your younger friend, that's fine, but they shouldn't try to pick your friends for you. So stand up for yourself and your younger friend. Say "I like her a lot, especially because she isn't bossy." That should get your point across!

MORE HELP!

Dear *American Girl,*

I have this friend who constantly eats when she comes over. How can I tell her to stop eating everything at my house?

not a snack machine

Before you invite your friend over, plan something fun, such as a craft or project. When she arrives, offer her a small snack, then start your activity. If she looks for more food, say "Sorry. One snack per customer. House rules." That should give your friend the idea that your kitchen isn't a free buffet. If she doesn't get the hint, think about going to your friend's house or meeting her at the park instead.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

My younger brother makes noise nonstop! He whistles and snaps his fingers. I'm the type who likes peace and quiet. I tell him to stop, but he says, "You're not the boss of me." My mom says to ignore him, but I can't. He drives me nuts.

I want to be an only child!

Your noisy brother might just be trying to get attention from you. Spend



time doing something fun with him before you need some silence. Then go to a "quiet zone" where you can do homework or read in peace and quiet. It could be your bedroom or a secluded corner of your house. Ask your brother to stay out of that place while you're there. With a little luck, he just might!

★

Dear *American Girl,*

I'm turning twelve, and my dad still likes holding my hand when we walk in museums and places like that. It's embarrassing! I love my dad very much, but I think I'll hurt his feelings when I tell him to stop holding my hand. What should I do?

Embarrassed but Loving

Chances are, your dad still thinks of you as his little girl and simply hasn't realized how grown-up you've become. Pick a good time to talk to him about it. Don't wait until he tries to hold your hand to ask him not to. That could take him by surprise and might hurt his feelings. The best time to talk to your dad is before you go somewhere that it's likely to happen. You could say, "Dad, I love you as much as ever, but I feel awkward about showing it in public by holding hands." He may be sad, but he will understand.

★

Advice from You

"If you hear girls talking about another girl in a not nice way, instead of joining in, stand up and say that it isn't nice to talk about her. It's easy to join in, but you will feel better about yourself if you don't."

Nicole G.

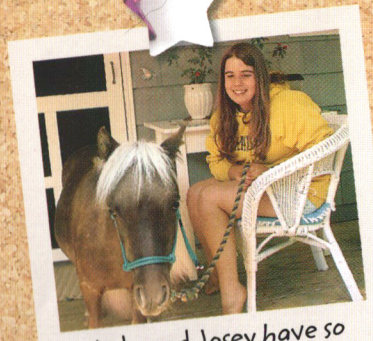
Age 13, New York

Need advice? Got advice? Write:
Help!
American Girl magazine™
8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562



Since we weren't sure if March would come in like a lion or a lamb, we chose outfits that would prepare us for both. We're hoping it comes in like a lamb since we thought Kelsey looked ready for spring in the outfit we picked for the cover.





Lulu and Josey have so much fun with their miniature horse, Willow.

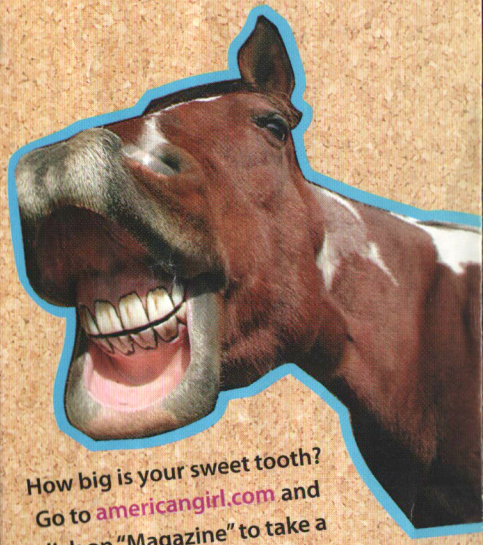


Go to americangirl.com and click on "Magazine" to see more photos of life with Willow.

Behind the Scenes

We did a lot of horsin' around while making this issue of *American Girl!*

Giddyup! How many horses can you find in this issue? Answer on page 44.



How big is your sweet tooth? Go to americangirl.com and click on "Magazine" to take a quiz on how much you know about your favorite candies.



For more of everything you love, go to americangirl.com and click on "Magazine."



Meet our art director, Lara, who adores horses. Here she is with Montana, Tango, Malibu, and her miniature donkey, Joey.

Photos: Chris Hamel; John McArthur; Jamie Young Schilling; Annie Sampo; Jacob Reddin

Sit, Stay, Smile!

You'll love these funny pet photos!



Family Quiz

See how much you know about your mom or dad.

American Girl™

Coming up in the June issue

Try puzzles made by girls like you! Visit americangirl.com and click on "Magazine."

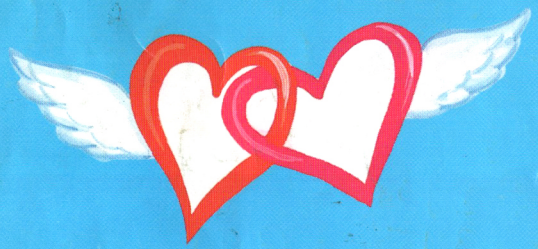


All About Allowance

How much is fair? See what other girls have to say.

Dreamy Rooms

Show your style with our cool crafts.



Faraway Friends

Cute and clever ideas for staying in touch across the miles

Take a Dip

Yummy lunch dips to make and share



Illustrations: Carol Yoshizumi





Illustrations: Lori Joy Smith

Did you know that one of the rules for naming thoroughbred racehorses is that their names cannot contain more than 18 letters? Here are some great names for your horses, whether they're real, stuffed, or drawn Applejack Autumn Babyface Banjo Best Boy Betty Birdie Blackberry Blizzard Bojangles Brownie Bunny Caramel Cashmere Chameleon Cinnamon Cocoa Cody Coral Coriander Dawn Denver Diamond Dust Bunny Echo Fairy Dust Feather Boa Gemini Georgia Girl Friday Goldie Good Luck Charm Goose Headdress Holy Mackerel Jelly Kismet Kitty Knickerbocker Kodiak Lightning Lyric Macaroon Magician Malted Milk Mambo Marjoram Marshmallow Midnight Mirage Moccasin Mocha Monty Moxie Muffin Opal Orion Peanut Pepper Phoenix Popcorn Pot of Gold Powder Puff Quicksilver Rainbow Raindrop Rocket Man Ruby Sass Serendipity Shockwave Silver Bells Silver Spur Smarty Pants Smooch Snowfall Snowflake Sparkle Springtime Starburst Stardust Starfish Starlight Strawberry Summer Sunday Best Sunset Sweetie Tango Thunder Trilogy Tundra Turtle Twilight Winter Zeus